



CALIFORNIA STATE THREAT ASSESSMENT CENTER

24-HOUR REPORT

13 AUGUST 2020

(U) CALIFORNIA

(U) Los Angeles – LAPD Investigating Possible “Swatting” Incident at Home of Activist

(U) The Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) is investigating a possible swatting incident after officers were called to the home of a prominent Black Lives Matter activist yesterday morning. An LAPD spokesperson said that officers responded to a call of a reported kidnapping at Melina Abdullah's home. The call, however, appears to have been a swatting and is under investigation, the spokesperson said. Swatting is a prank call made to authorities with the express purpose of luring them to a location where they are led to believe a horrific crime has been committed or is in progress.

SOURCE: 12 August 2020, [CNN](#)

(U) Menlo Park – Facebook Removed Seven Million Posts for False COVID-19 Information

(U) Facebook Inc. said on Tuesday it removed seven million posts in the second quarter of 2020 for sharing false information about COVID-19, including content that promoted fake preventative measures and exaggerated cures. It released the data as part of its sixth Community Standards Enforcement Report, which it introduced in 2018 along with more stringent decorum rules in response to a backlash over its lax approach to policing content on its platforms.

SOURCE: 12 August 2020, [Reuters](#)

(U) SOUTHWEST BORDER

(U) California – Agents Seize \$3.3 Million in Methamphetamine Hidden Among Cactuses

(U) Otay Mesa – For the second time in four days, federal agents on Tuesday found a large shipment of methamphetamine hidden inside a truck hauling crates of cactus pads across the Otay Mesa border, authorities said yesterday. The discovery was made Tuesday when US Customs and Border Protection officers sent a big rig hauling a trailer through an X-ray imaging system that revealed “anomalies within the shipment,” according to an agency news release. After drug-sniffing dogs alerted on the trailer, a more thorough search turned up 1,098 wrapped packages of methamphetamine hidden in crates and mixed in alongside the cactus pads. The total drug shipment weighed 1,464-pounds, which authorities said had an estimated street value of \$3.3 million.

SOURCE: 12 August 2020, [The San Diego Union-Tribune](#)

(U) NATIONAL

(U) District of Columbia – US DOJ Shutdown Websites Exploiting COVID-19 Pandemic

(U) Washington – The Department of Justice announced yesterday it has received a temporary restraining order against three defendants in Vietnam who are accused of wire fraud and operating more than 300 fraudulent websites that exploited the COVID-19 pandemic. According to the criminal complaint, the defendants' websites claimed to sell health and safety products that were hard to obtain during the pandemic, including hand sanitizer and disinfectant wipes. But federal officials said it was all part of an elaborate scam. Authorities said thousands of people in all 50 states fell victim to the scheme and tried to purchase items from the defendants' fraudulent sites, but never received the items they

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paid for. Additionally, the defendants allegedly put fake contact information on hundreds of websites, causing random people and businesses in the US to receive a flood of complaints from victims.

SOURCE: 12 August 2020, [WUSA 9](#)

(U) New York – Man Sentenced for Attempting to Join Terrorist Organization

(U) Manhattan – A New York man who had planned to join Pakistan-based terrorist organization Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and carry out acts of terrorism, has been sentenced to 15-years in prison and a lifetime of supervised release for attempting to provide material support to the terror organization. Jesus Wilfredo Encarnacion, 30, was sentenced for attempting to provide material support to LeT, which is responsible for multiple high-profile attacks, including the Mumbai terror attacks in November 2008, the Department of Justice said. Encarnacion had pleaded guilty in January 2020.

SOURCE: 12 August 2020, [News 18](#)

(U) Texas – Man Who Threatened Church Shooting Charged

(U) Lubbock – A man who allegedly threatened to commit a church shooting in Lubbock has been charged with a firearm offense following an investigation led by the FBI with support from the Bureau of Alcohol Tobacco and Firearms (ATF) and Homeland Security Investigations (HSI), the US Attorney's Office said. A North Vietnamese refugee living in Lubbock, Hieu Tran Trung, 45, has been charged via criminal complaint with being a felon in possession of a firearm. According the complaint affidavit, a friend reached out to the FBI after Trung allegedly stated that he would "spray up" random people at his church. Trung, who was barred from possessing firearms due to a 1998 felony, allegedly asked the friend to "get me one of them straps." The friend refused, but a week later, Trung allegedly texted the friend a photo of himself with two firearms.

SOURCE: 12 August 2020, [KCBD](#)

(U) Virginia – Crew Member Injured After USAF Helicopter Receives Ground Fire

(U) Manassas – A US Air Force helicopter was shot at near Manassas, Virginia, on Monday, injuring one of two pilots on board, according to an USAF official. The UH-1N was flying 10-miles northwest of Manassas on a routine training mission at an altitude of 1,000 feet when the incident occurred. It landed safely at Manassas Regional Airport west of Washington, DC, and the pilot was taken to hospital where they were treated and released, the official said. The incident is now under FBI and USAF investigation to determine if the helicopter was deliberately shot at or if someone was randomly shooting into the air. The aircraft will be closely inspected for other damage, the official added.

SOURCE: 12 August 2020, [CNN](#)

(U) INTERNATIONAL

(U) Israel – North Korean Cyber-Attack Thwarted

(U) Tel Aviv – Israel said yesterday it thwarted a cyber-attack on its defense industry by a hacking group known as Lazarus, which the US says is run by North Korean intelligence. Israel's Defense Ministry said hackers posing as potential employers sent job offers to defense workers trying to infiltrate their networks and gather sensitive information. The group built fake profiles on LinkedIn to disguise its hackers and separately attempted to hack Israeli defense firms via their websites, the ministry statement said. The attacks were identified in real time and thwarted with no disruption to the companies' networks, it added, without identifying the firms or saying when the incidents took place.

SOURCE: 12 August 2020, [Reuters](#)

(U) Mexico – Judge Orders Arrest of 19 Former Federal Police Officers

(U) Mexico City – A Mexican judge has issued warrants for the arrest of 19 former federal police officials

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under the last presidential administration, including a former chief of police for the capital, for alleged organized crime and money laundering, officials said on Tuesday. According to three officials, former Mexico City police chief Jesús Orta and 18 others are suspected of embezzling millions of dollars during their time in the federal police under the 2012-2018 presidency of Enrique Peña Nieto.

SOURCE: 12 August 2020, [NBC News](#)

(U) Mexico – Officials Seize Nearly 500-Pounds of Fentanyl from Spain

(U) Mexico City – Mexican customs authorities said yesterday they have seized almost 500-pounds of a chemical used to make the synthetic opioid fentanyl at a cargo terminal at the Mexico City airport. The six plastic drums of fentanyl precursor came on a flight from Spain, an unusual source for the drug. It was another sign that Mexican traffickers may be having a harder time getting their hands on fentanyl from their usual suppliers in Asia. Mexican cartels have traditionally received bulk shipments of the powerful synthetic opioid, or the precursor chemicals used to make it, from Asian countries in shipping containers. But lockdowns due to the pandemic appear to have temporarily dampened that source.

SOURCE: 12 August 2020, [The Associated Press](#)

(U) PREPARED BY THE CALIFORNIA STATE THREAT ASSESSMENT CENTER.

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